(b) if so, the reasons for the delay;

(c) the time bound programme for completion of the project; and

(d) Government's reaction on the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) It is expected that the work will be started by December 2006 and would be completed by June 2009.

Capacity of the Ports

1750. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is 10 percent growth rate in cargo at the ports;

(b) if so, whether we are able to handle the cargo after five years with the limited port capacity; and

(c) the possible steps Government are taking in this regard to increase the capacity of the ports?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Yes, Sir. The major ports in India achieved a growth of 10 percent or more during each of the last 3 years as given below:

Year	Cargo Traffic Handled (Million Tonnes)	Percentage growth
2003-04	344.80	10.0
2004-05	383.75	11.3
2005-06	423.41	10.3

(b) and (c) The aggregate capacity of the 12 major ports in India as on 31st March, 2006 is 456.20 million tonnes per annum (MTPA). Increase of capacity and improvement of the working of major ports in terms of handling of traffic in the country is an on-going process. Under the National Maritime Development Programme (NMDP) formulated by the Department of Shipping, a total of 276 projects involving development of berths, deepening of chanels, equipment upgradation/modernization, rail/

road connectivity are planned to be taken up over the period upto 2011-12 with a view to augmenting the capacity of the ports to 800.41 million tonnes per annum (MTPA). The total investment envisaged under the programme is Rs. 55,804 crores.

National Highways in Tripura

1751. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the proposals for undertaking the construction of new roads as National Highways by the States of NER;

(b) the names of the projects proposed by the State of Tripura; and

(c) Government's decision in regard to the proposals from the States of North Eastern Region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) to (c) Presumably the Hon'ble Member is referring to the proposals for declaring existing state roads as National Highways. Eight proposals from the North-Eastern States have been received after 25.2.2004 for declaring existing state roads as National Highways in these states. This includes the proposal of Government of Tripura to declare the Kukital to Sabroom via Dharmanagar-Amarpur, Rupaichari Road as a National Highway. At present, there is no proposal for declaring more roads as National Highways in the country including North Eastern Region, since priority is given for development of existing National Highways.

Interaction between ISRO and foreign based organisations

1752. SHRIMATI MOHSINHA KIDWAI:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ISRO has built a good number of satellite for weather, earth imaging, telecommunication, broadcasting, etc., for well-known Indian Corporate Houses;

(b) with the R&D efforts being speeded up during the last decade or so, is ISRO getting some similar orders from famous space organizations; and